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Lieutenant Governor Murray, Mayor Menino Celebrate Ten-Year Anniversary of Brownfield's Legislation, Revitalization of Contaminated Sites Across Massachusetts

BOSTON - Thursday, November 06, 2008 - Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray and Boston Mayor Thomas Menino today joined Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation (DBEDC) Executive Director Jeanne DuBois, Spire Executive Vice President Skip Dyer and state, local, and elected officials to mark the tenth anniversary of the Commonwealth's nationally acclaimed brownfields program and celebrate a decade of progress in environmental clean-up and economic growth.

Spire - a graphic design and printing company - hosted the event at its headquarters on the site of the former Boston Industrial Wire facility at 65 Bay Street in Dorchester's Savin Hill neighborhood. In 1998, then-Governor Paul Cellucci joined officials at the site to sign the landmark Massachusetts Brownfields Act legislation.

To date, more than 1,330 contaminated properties in 225 Massachusetts communities have received assistance through the state's toolbox of brownfields programs.

"Massachusetts was a national leader in waste site cleanups when the Brownfields Act was signed ten years ago, and the Commonwealth's innovative efforts continue to ensure that contaminated and abandoned sites are cleaned up and put back into productive use," said Lt. Gov. Murray. "By redeveloping remaining Brownfields sites, we can stimulate local economies, and protect the public and our natural resources."

Brownfields are vacant, abandoned, or underutilized industrial or commercial properties where expansion, redevelopment, or improvement is complicated by real or perceived environmental contamination and liability. The Brownfields Act of 1998 provided financial incentives and liability relief for parties undertaking brownfields cleanup projects. The Brownfields Act encourages developers to choose contaminated properties over clean sites, and revitalize urban centers and other areas where contaminated properties are concentrated. The financial incentives set forth in the legislation include the Brownfields Redevelopment Access to Capital (BRAC) Program, the Brownfields Redevelopment Fund (BRF), the Massachusetts Brownfields Tax Credit Program, and a Covenant Not To Sue Program.

The Massachusetts Business Development Corporation (MassBusiness) administers the BRAC program offering state-of-the-art and state-subsidized environmental insurance to help eliminate environmental risk associated with brownfields redevelopment. The Brownfields Redevelopment Fund (BRF) is administered by MassDevelopment and provides no interest or low-interest loans and grants for site assessment and cleanup in eligible communities. The [Brownfields Tax Credit Program](#), administered by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) offers eligible businesses and nonprofit organizations a tax credit, which may be used to offset state tax liability, transferred, assigned or sold, for the costs incurred to rehabilitate contaminated property. The Office of the Attorney General administers the Covenant Not To Sue program, which protects potential property buyers from liability for pre-existing contamination. In addition to administering the privatized waste site cleanup program, the Department of Environmental Protection works with communities and Brownfields developers to help address regulatory issues that impede Brownfields projects.

"The Brownfields Act has not only helped ensure the safety of our neighborhoods but also allowed us to revitalize these areas for better use by our community," said Mayor Menino. "Sites that were unclean, unsafe and unproductive are now being transformed into areas our neighborhoods can be proud of."

The revitalization of 65 Bay Street is one of the state's earliest brownfields success stories. Boston Insulated Wire & Cable Company operated its cable manufacturing and spooling business at the site for 80 years. When the company relocated in 1984 the building sat vacant for more than a decade. The Dorchester Bay Economic Development Council (DBEDC) purchased the five-acre property and discovered contaminants including heavy metals, oil, grease, and lead in soil surrounding the building. The DBEDC used brownfields funding to remediate the site and assembled a consortium of other funders to contribute to the total \$15 million project cost. In 2001, the DBEDC demolished the existing building, constructed a new 78,000-square-foot manufacturing

facility and helped Spire, Inc. relocate, bringing 100 new jobs to the area. The redevelopment of the property served as a catalyst for additional renewal projects and business ventures that revitalized the struggling Savin Hill neighborhood.

"The Commonwealth's brownfields programs allow nonprofit CDCs like us to tackle the toughest contaminated sites in our neighborhoods and bring them into productive use," said DBEDC Executive Director Dubois. "Since Spire opened, bringing jobs and new investment to Savin Hill, we have cleaned up nine more brownfields sites creating new opportunities for affordable housing and job creation in Dorchester. Thanks to the Brownfields Act of 1998 we are no longer afraid of environmentally problematic properties."

In October, the Patrick-Murray Administration designated November Brownfields Month, an opportunity to celebrate the decade anniversary of the state Brownfields Act, and highlight new initiatives. The event at Spire is the first in a series that will take place during Brownfields Month, including a November 13 event at the Worcester Boys & Girls Club, a November 20 event at the former Greenfield Tap & Die property in Greenfield, and a November 25 event with the Environmental Business Council in Taunton.

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